THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rule 44 AA of PFA Rules 1955 prohibits the sale of fruits which have been artificially ripended by use of acetylene gas commonly known as Carbide Gas.

(c) Since, no gas is available on the surface of the fruit it is not possible to carry out the test on the fruit. However, methodology for detection of Carbide gas in treated fruits at godown level has been circulated to State Governments. The State Governments have also been requested to collect circumstantial evidence of presence of Calcium Carbide kept together with the fruits in godowns for providing proofs before the Courts.

(d) All the Food (Health) authorities of States/UT Government have been asked from time to time to keep a vigil on use of Calcium Carbide in ripening of fruits and take legal action for violation of the provisions.

Transfusion of untested blood to Children

1567. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that doctors are transfusing blood to children who are suffering from weakness or mild anaemia;

(b) whether it is also a fact that most of the blood is untested and is likely to transmit the AIDS virus in the kids;

(c) whether in one study on 27 HIV positive children, 12 were found to have been infected from this treatment; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) A study was conducted in AIIMS on 27 children with HIV infection who reported to them over a 4 year period. Among other findings, it was found that in 12 of 27 children contaminated blood transfusion seems to have been the source of infection. The Government has taken a number of steps to contain infections being transmitted through transfusion, such as, (i) Testing of each unit of blood and its products for freedom from HIV 1 and 2 antibodies, Hepatitis B surface antigen, Hepatitis C antibody, Malaria and

Syphilis. This is mandatory under the provisions of Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, the implementation of which is being strengthened, (ii) Professional donation has been banned and voluntary donation is being promoted through various IEC strategies, (iii) National blood policy expected to function as a strategic framework for developing a safe, reliable and efficient blood transfusion services in the country has been formulated. National Blood Transfusion Council at the national level and State Blood Transfusion Councils at the state level have established to help in better management of Blood Transfusion Services.

Use of Expired Medicines During Pulse Polio Drive

1568. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that expired medicines were used during the pulse polio drive;

(b) whether it is also a fact that most of such cases were detected in U.P. and Rajasthan;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the CBI has registered cases of not providing the polio dose in Rajasthan, besides the scam of Rs. 40 lakhs; and

(e) if so, the details of action taken against the officials found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HELATH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Question does not arise.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. There has been no report of any case registered for not providing polio doses in Rajasthan. However, a case of alleged financial irregularity by some officials of Rajasthan Government is presently under investigation by CBI.

Meeting of Chief Ministers on AIDS

1569. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister had called a meeting of the Chief Ministers to discuss the alarming situation arising out of AIDS;

(b) if so, the major decisions taken to control the alarming situation;

(c) the number of AIDS/HIV patients in the country as on today; and